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Editorial --

John Lennon and Paul McCartney might well have been singing about the production of a fanzine when they crooned the immortal words: " Oh, I get by with a little help from my friends." EVIL EYE might never have seen print if I didn't have a lot of help from my friends. Friends like Gary Kato and Bruce D. Patterson, whom I've never met but whose artwork I admire greatly.

Or Bill Black, whom I have met several times. Bill and I have had many enjoyable conversations, both here, in Walpole, and at the Seuling Con., about everything from "Wonder Wart Hog" to Roger Corman. Although our tastes don't always coincide, I don't think he'll disagree with me when I say that he is one of the best artists, and probably the best fan inker around.

And what can I say about Tom Fagan that hasn't been said dozens of times before: The Batman fan supreme; the originator of the famous Rutland Halloween Parades; one of fandom's most talented writers; and on top of all that, he is a damn nice guy. I'm proud to call him friend.

Speaking of fandom's best writers, Bob Cosgrove is definitely one of them. His piece this issue, "The Fanastic Years," was written originally for his own fondly remembered fanzine, Champion. When it looked as if Champion would never see print again (at least not in the foreseeable future) he generously allowed me to use the article in EVIL EYE.

Harry Harrison has been one of my favorite Science Fiction authors ever since I first read Bill the Galactic Hero way back in my sophomore year in high school. When I wrote to him, I didn't really expect a reply. How wrong I was! He not only allowed me to adapt any of his stories I chose to comic book form, he even gave me some much needed pointers on lettering! The chances are pretty good that you'll be seeing more of my adaptations of Harry's excellent stories in future issues of EVIL EYE. If I ever get really ambitious, I may even serialize one of his novels. Either the Deathworld or Stainless Steel Rat series would be ideal as a continuing feature.

If I ever wrote a "My Most Unforgetable Character" article for Readers' Digest, it would be about Marty Greim. His talents as an editor, writer, and artist would be enough to brand him as unusual. But, Marty isn't content merely to write about and draw super-heroes, he is a super-hero, a battler for truth, justice, and the American way!

I'd like to take this space to thank Esquebedo Demerary for the loan of the Neal Adams original which graces the front cover, Wayne Pond for the back cover, Bob Pollio and Steve Fritz for their interior illoes.

And, last, but far from least, I'd like to thank the woman who's typing this, and whose drawing below illustrates the way I feel about her; my wife, Sue.

- Al Bradford

EVIL EYE

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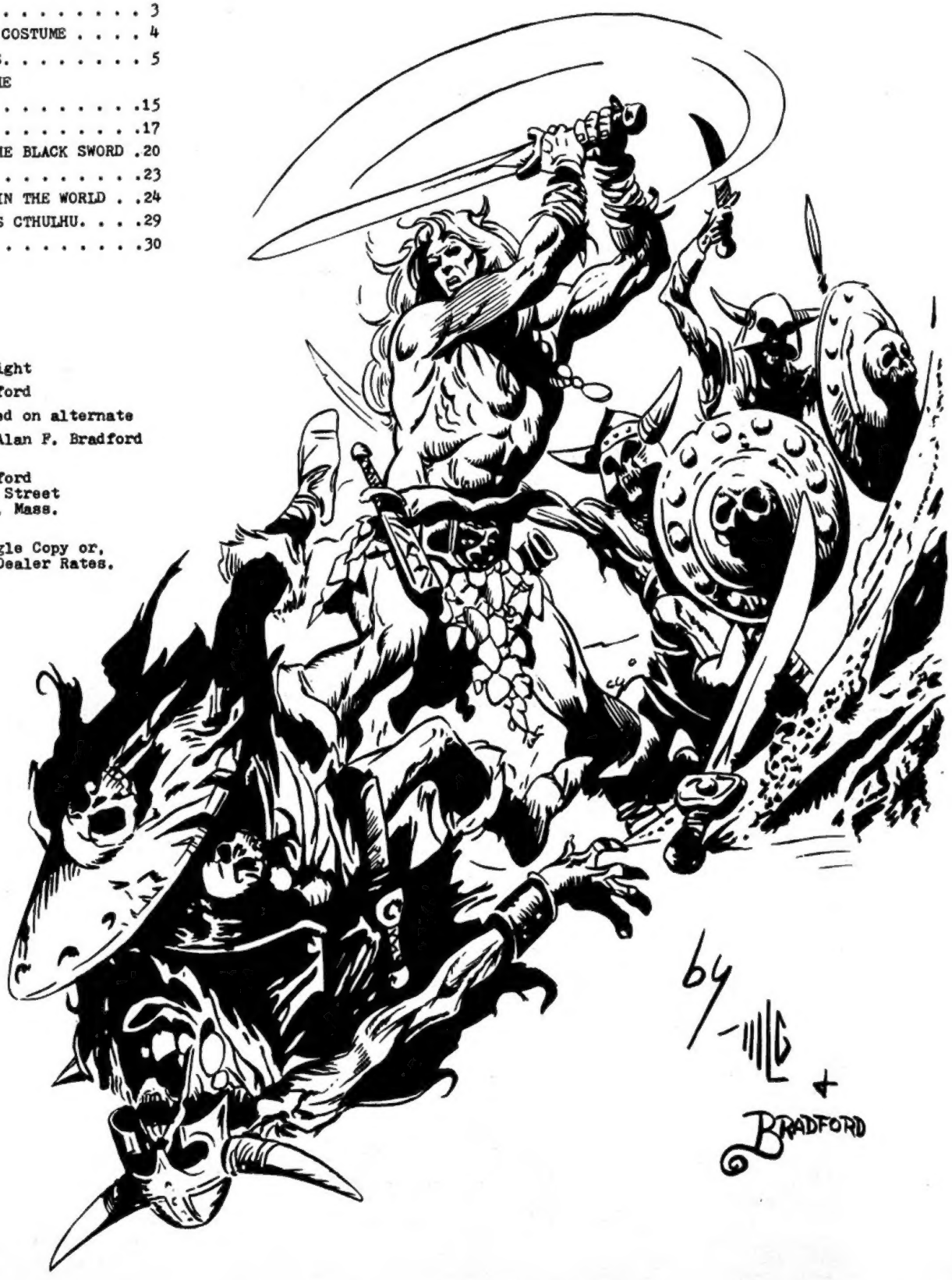


Plugs 'N Previews

PARAGON NO. 5

Available for $2.00 from Bill Black
1515 Bowman Drive
Tallahassee, Fla. 32303

Frankly, "B" Westerns aren't my cup of tea, but I won't hold it against Bill, or anyone else who does like them. If you do, then you can't afford to miss this issue of Paragon, with its huge 30 plus page article on Charles Starret, better known as The Durango Kid. Even if you're like me and can't see The Durango Kid for dust, this ish is worthwhile, with its nice articles on the Lieutenant Marvels, "Who the Heck is Xog?" (A Golden Age article written and drawn by Marty Greim), a short fiction piece by Tom Fagan, and an article on Johnny Thunder.

THE WATER STREET ADVENTURE #1

Will soon be available from:

Ron Fortier
13A Water St.
Somersworth, N.H.
03878

Don't order this goody yer, but when you see an ad for it, grab it. The first issue will feature the adventures of an Ama-Hero called Freedom Fighter. His origin entitled "Red is the Shadow Across My Land" is by Tom Fagan, and features illoes by Marty Greim, Bruce D. Patterson, Joe Staton, and (ahem) yours truly, among others.

The second issue will feature the adventures of the little lady you see to your right: The White Raven, the world's first black ex-prostitute super-heroine. Plot and layout by Martin Greim, art and script by me. Also in the second ish of the W.S.A. will be a story about Brian Helix, supernatural investigator, story by Ron Fortier, Illoes by Al Bradford (who's he?)

COMIC CRUSADER #15

Available for 75¢ from:

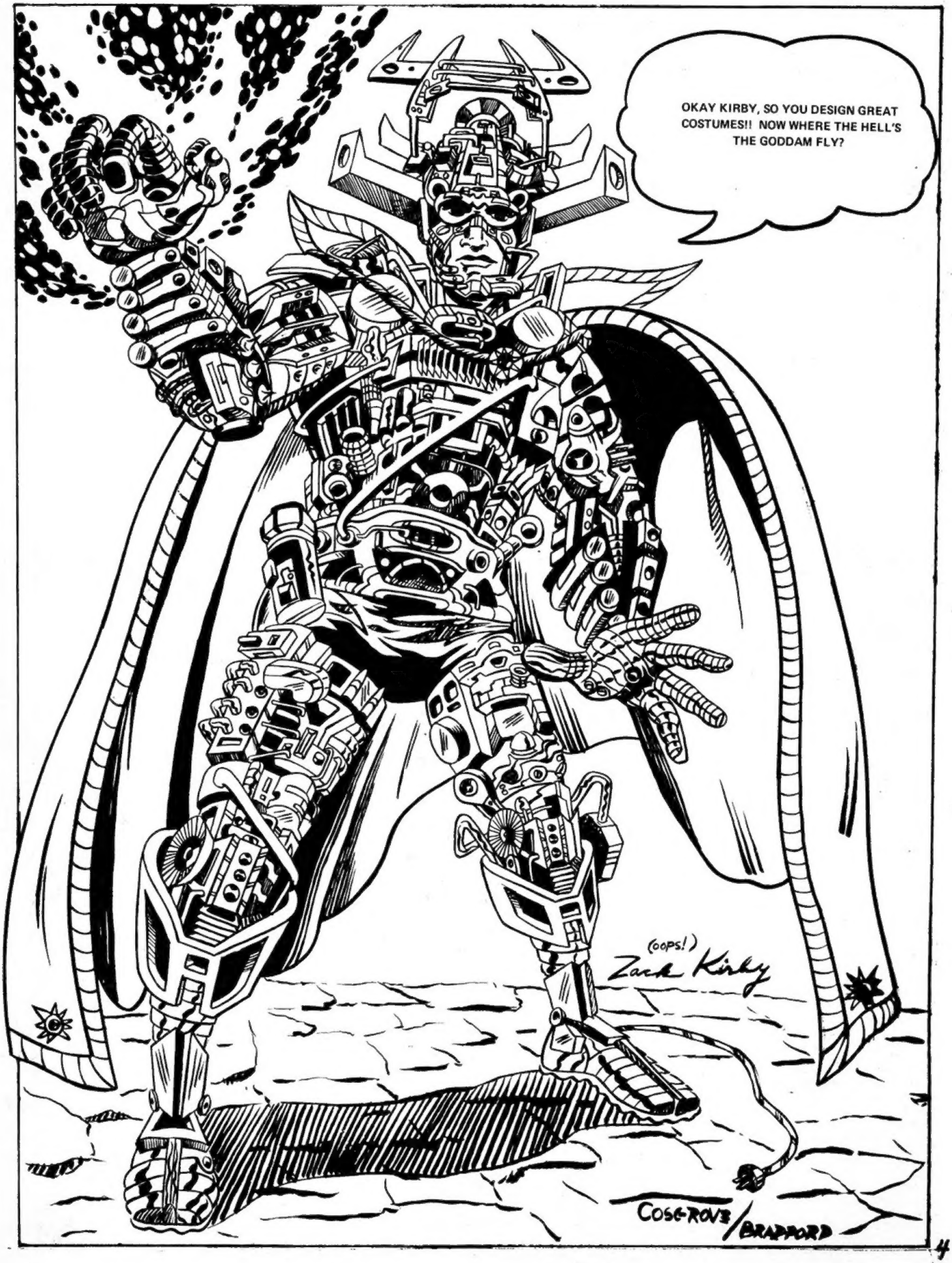
Martin L. Greim
Box 132
Dedham, Mass.
02026

Comic Crusader has one of the best reputations in the fanzine business, and deservedly so. The consistently high quality of the writing, artwork and printing is the reason. This issue has a full color cover by Kurt Schaffenberger of Captain Marvel and Sivana, and a previously unpublished back cover by the late, great, Syd Shores. Inside is an article on the many battles between the Big Red Cheese and Sivana. It is written and illustrated by John Clark and Don Newton. Then an in-depth interview with Jack and Otto Binder, two of the guiding forces behind the Marvel Family, with unpublished Binder and Mac Raboy art. Dave Cockrum and Kurt Schaffenberger get the interview treatment this ish, too. Then a new strip by Steve Ditko, an article on Captain Nazi, and a tribute to Bill Everett round out the issue. For six bits, you can't go wrong.

Comic Crusader #16 is almost ready to go to press, and though paper and postage price increases have forced the price for this next ish up to a buck, it will be worth it! Order your copy today and avoid the rush!

Evil Eye #2: Care to contribute? Writers and artists welcome, but include a stamped, self-addressed envelope so we can return your stuff if we can't use it. Or write a letter so we can have a letters page. Do something! Thanx,

-- Al Bradford


OKAY KIRBY, SO YOU DESIGN GREAT COSTUMES!! NOW WHERE THE HELL'S THE GODDAM FLY?
(oops!)
Zark Kirby
COSGROVE/BRADFORD

Editor's note: Champion does not as a rule, devote feature space to recent material. However, we felt the magazine here featured warranted an exception. Originally conceived as a Comic Crusader–Champion Special, celebrating the 100th issue of the Fantastic Four, plans for our index changed when we learned that Kirby was leaving Marvel. Recently, we decided to incorporate the material into our regular column devoted to Jack Kirby. The centerspread, drawn by Martin L. Greim, contains 100 different characters who appeared in the first hundred issues of the Fantastic Four.

THE FANTASTIC YEARS

ARTICLE: BOB COSGROVE
ART: WILLIAM BLACK, BOB COSGROVE, GARY KATO, STEVE FRITZ, & MARTIN GREIM

In any team production, it's difficult to assign credit. So it is with the Fantastic Four; the words were Lee's, the artwork and story-telling Kirby's -- of that we may be sure. The rest--character creation, concepts--are difficult to judge. For example, we know that the Silver Surfer was entirely a Kirby idea. On the other hand, what of Galactus, who appeared in Lee's story synopsis? Is he a Stan Lee creation? And if he is a product of the Lee mind, did Kirby make him work, distinguish him from Overmind and the other well-nigh omnipotent Marvel creations? Perhaps. Perhaps not.

Now that it is over, we wonder how it might have been if Lee OR Kirby had run the entire show. Stan Lee speaks disdainfully of the "Living Totem" issue of the F.F., number 80, which, he says with convincing disgust, was nothing like his plot synopsis. Grumblings from California charge that the Silver Surfer & Kree concepts were crucified for a fast buck. Who can really judge?

We do know this--the Lee and Kirby team, in their decade together, rewrote the textbooks. Gone forever were the old heroic stereotypes.

It was during his stay at Marvel that Kirby became justly famous as the greates interpreter of the super-hero concept. Indeed, the entire Marvel line, with the possible exception of Ditko's Dr. Strange, bore the Kirby stamp.

The Fantastic Four is significant in many ways; it began the entire Marvel rennaissance, ((and ended it?)) and it contains the longest uninterrupted run of Kirby work to appear anywhere. More important, however, is that while Kirby was setting the style for the sixties, he also used the Fantastic Four to innovate within the comic technique and to develop as an artist and a story-teller. Kirby developed a serial technique, allowing him to present the Fantastic Four as an episodic novel, with various plot strings continuing through many adventures. At the same time, Kirby assembled a mind-staggering multitude of supporting characters, and often shifted the focus on them, rather than the FF, much as a newspaper strip soap-opera will almost never center the action on its main character, but rather, about him.

The Fantastic Four was no newspaper soap-opera, however, and the four certainly received the lion's share of attention.

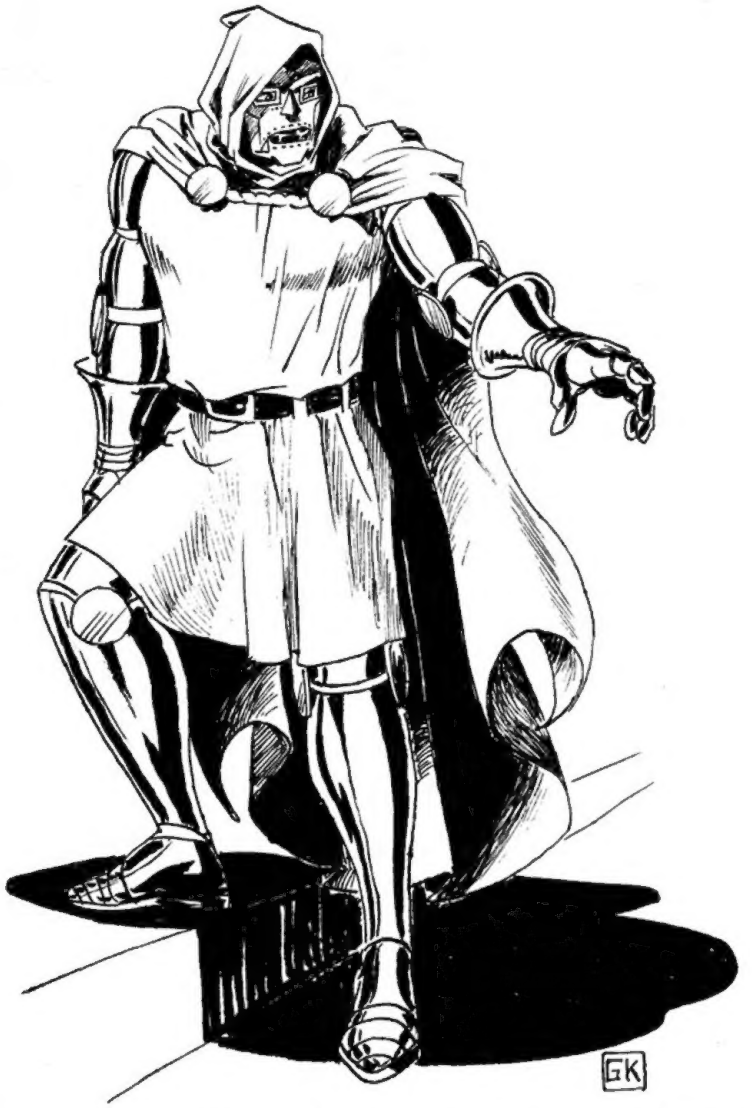
Also at Marvel, Kirby finally mastered the technique of comic-relief, that necessary human touch which often seemed so shrill and overdone in his days with Joe Simon.

Perhaps Kirby's peak creative period was during 1965-1966, in Fantastic Fours #s 44-54. It was in those issues that Jack introduced such characters as the Inhumans, the Silver Surfer, Galactus, Wyatt Wingfoot, the negative zone, Klaw, Prester John, the wanderer, and the Marvel Age's first black super-hero, the Black Panther. For those creations, and others, the Fantastic Four stands almost unchallenged as the finest graphic achievment of the sixties.

--Bob Cosgrove

And now, we present a complete index to--The Fantastic years.

1. (Nov., 1961) Reed Richards leads test pilot Ben Grimm, girlfriend Sue Storm and her brother Johnny in an expedition to the moon. On the way, however, t their rocket is buffeted by cosmic rays, and they crash back to earth. There, they discover that Johnny has the ability to burst into living flame, that Sue can become invisible, that Reed has become a reincarnated Plastic Man, and that Ben has developed super-human strength at the cost of a grotesque appearance. Vowing to use their abilities for good, the four set out to solve the mystery of vanishing atomic plants, a mystery which brings them into con-



tact with the Moleman. In this first issue, the FF signal flare is introduced. Reed and Ben look considerably less attractive than their present day counterparts. Both Torch and Thing are drawn in a manner different from today. Inking: Sol Brodsky (?)

2. (Jan., 1962) The FF are impersonated by Skrulls, aliens who can transform their appearance at will. Mistaken for criminals, the FF succeed in infiltrating the Skrull band and tricking them in such a fashion as to prevent their invasion of the earth. In this story, the Thing temporarily reverts to Ben Grimm for the first time. Inking: Sol Brodsky (?) Chapter titles: 1. "The FF Meet the Skrulls from Outer Space" 2. "Prisoner of the Skrulls" 3. "The FF Fight Back!" 4. "The FF . . .Captured!"

3. (Mar.) The FF fight the Miracle Man, a magician who seemingly can do anything, until Reed proves that he is merely a clever hypnotist. At the story's end, the Thing picks a fight with the Torch, causing him to quit the FF and fly off in anger. In response to reader request, the FF receive costumes, contrary to Lee and Kirby's original intention. The Thing's costume is exactly like everyone else's, except for a special helmet. Disliking such restricting attire, he strips to the waist for battle. FF costumes included very wide black collars and a 3-d "4" symbol, which Kirby at first carefully drew in every panel, only to give up the effort when he found the inker omitting it nine times out of ten. Also introduced: Baxter Bldg.--the FF's headquarters, and the Fantasticar. Inking: Sol Brodsky (?) Chapter titles: 1. "The FF, in . . . the Menace of the Miracle Man" 2. "The Monster Lives!" 3. "The Flame that Died!" 4. "In the Shadow of Defeat!"

4. (May) While the FF search for the Torch, he seeks refuge in a bowery flophouse. There, he encounters an amnesiac who turns out to be the Sub-Mariner. S-M isn't grateful when Johnny restores his memory, for when he trys to return to his watery kingdom he discovers that it has been decimated by an atomic test. As Namor declares war on humanity, Johnny, realizing that he is in over his head, signals the FF, who succeed in driving Namor back into the sea. This issue establishes the beginning of a romantic attraction between Namor and Sue Storm. Inking: Sol Brodsky (?) Chapter titles: "The FF in the Coming of . . . Sub-Mariner!" 1. "On the Trail of the Torch!" 2. "Enter, the Sub-Mariner!" 3. "Let the World Beware!" 4. "Sub-Mariner's Revenge!" 5. "Return to the Deep!"

5. (July) In this issue, the FF first encounter their greatest foe, Dr. Doom, whose iron mask hides a face scarred by forbidden experiments. Doom blackmails the FF into journeying into the past to obtain the treasure of Blackbeard in exchange for the life of Susan Storm. The FF trick him, and when Doom is unable to kill them, he escapes with the aid of a rocket-powered flying harness. Inking: Joe Sinnott, the FF's best inker, in his first and best inking effort. Chapter titles: 1. "Prisoners of Doctor Doom!" 2. "Back to the Past!" 3. "Battle!" 4. "On the Trail of Blackbeard" 5. "The Vengeance of Doctor Doom!"

6. (Sept.) Dr. Doom convinces Sub-Mariner to join him in a plot to hurl the entire Baxter Bldg. into outer space. However, after Namor secretes the necessary device, Doom triggers it earlier than planned, double-crossing the Sea Prince. The angry Namor saves the FF, and casts Doom adrift on an asteroid, seemingly dooming Doom. Inking: Dick Ayers. Chapter titles: 1. "Captives of the Deadly Duo!" 2. "When Super-Menaces Unite" 3. "When Friends Fall Out!" 4. "Trapped!" 5. "The End . . . Or the Beginning?"

7. (Oct.) A space villain named Kurrgo kidnaps the FF to persuade them to save his planet from destruction by a runaway asteroid. Inking: Dick Ayers. Chapter titles: 1. "It Came from the Skies!" 2. "The FF Outlawed!" 3. "Bound for Planet X!" 4. "The End of Planet X!"

8. (Nov.) A puppet-maker uses radioactive dolls that enable him to control the person they are fashioned after, and sets out to defeat the FF. He falls to his supposed death after a puppet of himself meets a similar fate. In this issue, the Thing's Romantic interest, Alicia (the puppet-master's blind stepdaughter) is introduced, and Reed first attempts to find a formula that will return the Thing to normal form. Inking: Dick Ayers. Chapter titles: 1. "Prisoners of the Puppet Master!" 2. "the Hands of the Puppet Maker" 3. The Lady and the Monster!" 4. "Face-to-Face with the Puppet Master!" 5. "Death of a Puppet!"

9. (Dec.) The FF lose all their money when the stock market crashes, but hope appears when they receive a movie-offer, only to vanish when they learn that the producer is Sub-Mariner, who uses each movie set as a trap. In this issue, the Thing fights Sub-Mariner, defeating him decisively, only to be felled by a lightning bolt. Inking: Dick Ayers. Chapter titles: 1. "The End of the Fantastic Four!" 2. "Sub-Mariner Gives the Orders!" 3. "The Fury of Mr. Fantastic" 4. "The Flame of Battle" 5. "Vengeance is Ours!"

10. (Jan., 1963) Dr. Doom, rescued from extinction by friendly aliens, learns the secret of exchanging bodies, a secret he uses on Mr. Fantastic. His evil nature, however, gives him away. Lee and Kirby draw themselves into an important segment of the story, as Doom forces them to lure Reed into his trap. Inking: Dick Ayers. Chapter titles: 1. "The Return of Doctor Doom!" 2. "Back from the Dead!" 3. "The End of Mr. Fantastic?" 4. "No Place to Turn!" 5. "The REAL Dr. Doom!"

11. (Feb.) In "A Visit with the FF," an expanded origin recap, the FF answer reader questions about themselves. "The Impossible Man" (2nd story), a space tourist, makes things hectic for the FF, until they ignore him, boring him enough so that he returns to his own planet. Inking: Dick Ayers on both stories.

12. (Mar.) The army suspects the Hulk of sabotage, and asks the FF to help. Actually, they only get in the way, hindering the Hulk from finding the real wrecker. Inking: Dick Ayers. Chapter titles: 2. "Mission: Stop the Hulk!" 3. "Who is the Wrecker?" 4. "The Hulk at Last!"

13. (Apr.) The FF make a second, successful attempt to reach the moon, but discover a communist scientist and his trained apes, who possess powers equaling those of the FF themselves. Also in this issue, the FF first encounter the mysterious Watcher. Inking: Steve Ditko. Chapter titles: "The FF, vs. The Red Ghost and his Indescribable Super-Apes!" 2. "Menance on the Moon!" 3. "The Watcher Appears!" 4. "Duel in the Dead City!"

14. (May) "The Sub-Mariner Strikes" is the over-all title for this issue, which marked an end to chapter breakdowns and titles. Hypnotized by the now-alive Puppet Master, Sub-Mariner again attacks the FF, but ruins Puppet Master's scheme by refusing to kill them. Inking: Dick Ayers.

15. (June) "The Mad Thinker and his Awesome Android!" Aided by an arsenal of computers, a villain named the Thinker succeeds in taking over the Baxter Bldg. and fighting the FF with their own weapons. Inking: Dick Ayers.

16. (July) "The Micro-World of Dr. Doom!" With the help of the Ant-man, the FF pursues Dr. Doom to a sub-atomic world. Inking: Dick Ayers.

17. (Aug.) "Defeated by Dr. Doom!" or (cover title) "In the Clutches of Dr. Doom!" Having returned to their own world, the FF battle Doom in his flying headquarters, only to see him jump from the ship in defeat. Inking: Dick Ayers.

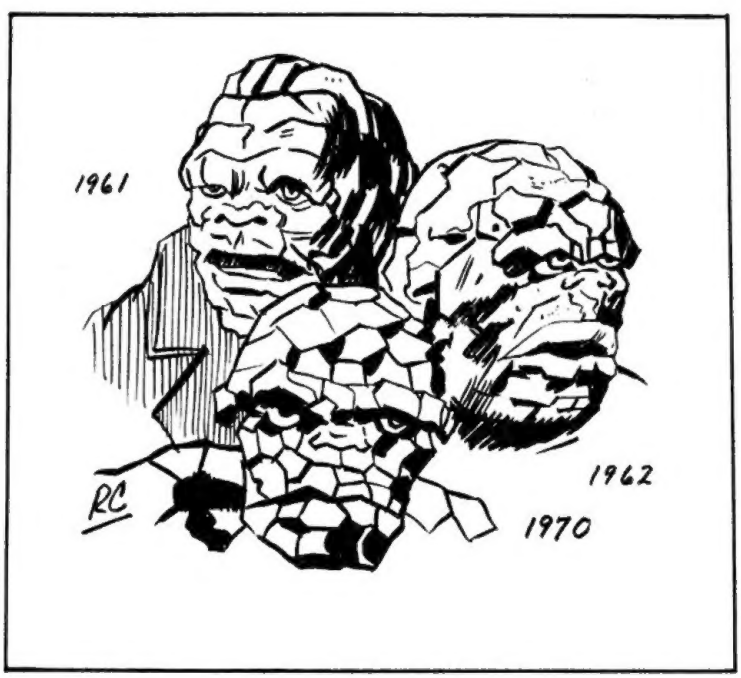
18. (Sept.) "A Skrull Walks Among Us!" A "Super" Skrull with all the powers of the FF is on the verge of conquering Earth, until Reed cuts off his power source. Inking: Dick Ayers.

19. (Oct.) "Prisoners of the Pharoah!" The FF, traveling back in time to find a cure for Alica's blindness, discover a pharoah who is actually a villainous time traveller from Earth's distant future. Inking: Dick Ayers.

20. (Nov.) "The Mysterious Molecule Man!" An accident transforms a lab technician into a super-villain who can control inorganic matter. The Watcher appears again in order to alert the FF. Inking: Dick Ayers.

21. (Dec.) "The Hate Monger!" Nick Fury, now a colonel in the CIA, tricks the FF into battling the Hate-Monger until he can free them from the Monger's sinister spell. Shot by one of his own men, the unmasked Hate-Monger lies revealed as Adolph Hitler. (Or a double!) Inking: George Bell (George Roussos), whose scratchy style did little to appease fans who admired the competent inking of Dick Ayers. During Bell's reign, however, the Thing began to look very much the same as he does today.

22. (Jan., 1963) "The Return of the Mole Man!" Sue gets a chance to test her new powers of constructing force fields and making things invisible against an old foe. Inking: George Bell.



23. (Feb.) "The Master Plan of Doctor Doom!" Doom transforms three ordinary felons into super-criminals who aid him in luring the FF into a trap. Once again, Doom is lost in outer space. Inking: George Bell.

24. (Mar.) "The Infant Terrible!" The FF are at a loss in finding a way to defeat the most powerful foe of all, until Reed deduces that the alien attacker is actually an infant, and develops a way to call his parents. (Honest!) Inking: George Bell.

25. (Apr.) "The Hulk Vs. The Thing" With Reed ill, Torch and Invisible Girl out of action, and the rampaging Hulk tearing New York apart, only the Thing stands between the green monster and the city's total destruction. He doesn't stand very long, though, because the Hulk clobbers him. Inking: George Bell.

26. (May) "The Avengers Take Over!" The Avengers and the FF give the Thing an assist, but it is Rick Jones who really saves the day by changing the Hulk back to human form. Inking: George Bell.

27. (June) "The Search for the Sub-Mariner!" S-M kidnaps Sue in a futile attempt to convince her to marry him, but a fighting mad Reed Richards pursues him, assisted by Doctor Strange. In this issue, Sue openly states that her true love is for Reed. Inking: George Bell.

28. (July) "We Have to Fight the X-Men!" Why? Because the Puppet Master and the Thinker have gained mental control over Professor X, who orders his mutant pupils to attack the FF. When the two groups learn of the plot, the Beast succeeds in smashing the Prof. X puppet, thus allowing X, and the two super-teams, to strike back. Inking: Chic Stone, who didn't copy Bell's scratchy style, but simply inked the FF as though it were a coloring book.

29. (Aug.) "It Started on Yancy Street!" The Red Ghost in a return engagement on the Moon. Also on hand is the Watcher. Inking: Chic Stone.

30. (Sept.) "The Dreaded Diablo" A centuries-old villain named Diablo, freed from his crypt, turns the Thing against the FF by promising to return him to human form. Inking: Chic Stone.

31. (Oct.) "The Mad Menace of the Macabre Mole Man!" The FF are in a difficult situation: The Moleman, still attempting to conquer the Earth, has captured Sue, and threatens to kill her unless the FF prevent him from being attacked. The Avengers, however, insist on attacking MM immediately. Inking: Chic Stone.

32. (Nov.) "Death of a Hero!" Sue and Johnny hinder Reed's battle against a new villain called the Invincible Man, because the believe him to be their father, Dr. Franklin Storm. Things look different, however, when Reed proves that the Invincible Man is nothing more than a Skrull impersonator. Inking: Chic Stone.

33. (Dec.) "Side-By-Side with Sub-Mariner!" At Lady Dorma's request, the FF help the Sub-Mariner defeat Attuma, an enemy who attempts to take Atlantis by storm. This issue features a photographic cover. Inking: Chic Stone.

34. (Jan., 1964) "A House Divided!" The world's richest man takes on the FF as a means of gaining still more financial power. Inking: Chic Stone.

35. (Feb.) "Calamity on the Campus!" Diablo returns to challenge the FF, aided by a synthetic dragon created by a university prof. Inking: Chic Stone.

36. (Mar.) "The Frightful Four!" As Reed and Sue announce their engagement, and as Chic Stone reaches an all-time inking low, the Wizard, Sandman, and Paste-Pot Pete, all for-

mer foes of the Torch, band together to attack the FF. Adding Madam Medusa, a female with mental control over her long hair, the "Frightful Four" attack, meeting defeat, but managing an escape. Inking: Chic Stone.

37. (Apr.) "Behold! A Distant Star!" Sue determines to bring to justice the Skrull who murdered her father, but to do so, the FF must battle the entire Skrull planet at a time when their powers mysteriously desert them. Inking: Chic Stone.

38. (May) "Defeated by the Frightful Four!" When the Frightful Four attack in force, they manage to catch the FF in an atomic explosion. Sue erects a force field, but will that alone save the FF? In this issue, Paste-Pot Pete becomes the Trapster. Inking: Chic Stone.

39. (June) "A Blind Man Shall Lead Them!" Frank Giacoia's inking is a breath of fresh air. The FF discover that the explosion has destroyed their powers. Thus, they have only artificial devices to aid them when Dr. Doom captures the Baxter Bldg. The Daredevil enters the picture. . .In this issue only, Wally Wood inks Jack's version of Daredevil. Inking: Frank Ray (Giacoia) and Wallace Wood.

40. (July) "The Battle of the Baxter Building!" While Daredevil attacks Doom, the powerless FF rushes the building in an effort to obtain a device which will return their powers. One member regains his reluctantly, and as the Thing springs to life once more, Doom faces crushing defeat. A hollow victory for the FF? Blinded with rage, the creature that was Ben Grimm walks out on the FF. Vince Colletta halts Kirby's streak of good inkers at one issue. Inking: Vince Colletta.

41. (Aug.) "The Brutal Betrayal of Ben Grimm!" The alienated Thing leaves the FF, only to fall into the hands of the Frightful Four, whose ID machine places him under the Wizard's control, changing his nature to that of an evil monster. Will Ben kill his three former team mates? Inking: Vince Colletta.

42. (Sept.) "To Save You, Why Must I Kill You?" Two of the Frightful Four's captives, Reed and Sue, manage to break free, but escape seems impossible now that the Torch has also become an ally of the Wizard. Inking: Vince Colletta.

43. (Oct.) "Lo, There Shall Be An Ending!" The FF manage to escape with the Thing as a captive. Discovering that the Torch is not really under the ID machine's influence, the Frightful Four imprison him. Reed's attempts to reconvert the Thing render Ben unconcious, but at the last minute, he awakens to save the day. Three of the four are captured, but Johnny, romanticly attracted to Madam Medusa, allows her to escape. Inking: Vince Colletta.

44. (Nov.) "The Gentleman's Name is Gorgon!" Medusa enlists the help of Johnny and the FF in escaping from the mysterious Gorgon, who can cause earthquakes with a single stamp of his powerful foot. Dragon man returns to complicate the plot, and Joe Sinnott returns to turn in the finest inking job since FF #5. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

45. (Dec.) "Among Us Hide the Inhumans!" Johnny discovers a beautiful girl named Crystal, who happens to be accompanied by a monsterous dog with teleportation powers. In addition to Crystal's canine friend "Lockjaw," there is a karate expert dubbed Karnak, and a mysterious man called Triton. Later, Johnny learns that Crystal belongs to the same family as Gorgon and Medusa, and escaping, signals the FF. As the battle is about to begin, a new character named Black Bolt enters the picture. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

46. (Jan., 1966) "Those Who Would Destroy Us!" Triton is revealed as a fish-man, and Black Bolt, tho' unable to speak, can fly and has strength rivaling the Thing's. This won't save them tho', from the eyes of the Seeker, whose job it is to return them to the land from whence they fled. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

47. (Feb.) "Beware the Hidden Land!" Black Bolt returns to the "Great Refuge" to regain his crown from his mad brother Maximus, and then confronts the FF. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

48. (Mar.) "The Coming of Galactus!" The Mad Maximus imprisons the Inhumans inside an impenetrable negative zone, separating Johnny from Crystal. The Watcher, meanwhile, warns the FF of impending doom for all mankind, and breaks his non-interferance vow in order to hide the Earth from the coming of the Silver Surfer, herald to Galactus. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

49. (Apr.) "If This Be Doomsday!" Galactus, pillager of planets, is about to absorb Earth's energies as food for himself. But when the Silver Surfer encounters Alica, she convinces him to challenge his master. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

50. (May) "The Startling Saga of The Silver Surfer!" Reed and the Watcher defeat Galactus, who angrily removes his rebelious herald's ability to travel through space. The Human Torch enrolls in college, encountering Wyatt Wingfoot, a huge, mysterious hulk of a man, who is of Indian descent. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

51. (June) "This Man. . .This Monster!" While the Torch gets involved in a college squabble, a scientist succeeds in changing the Thing to Ben Grimm, and himself to. . .the Thing. He attempts to destroy the FF, but in a sudden change of heart, saves them at the cost of his own life. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

52. (July) "The Black Panther!" The FF and Wyatt battle a Black superhero and African chieftan called the Black Panther. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

53. (Aug.) "The Way It Began. . ." As the Panther reveals his origin, the FF battle Klaw, master of sound. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

54. (Sept.) "Whosoever Finds The Evil Eye. . ." Johnny tries to use an evil eye in his attempt to free Crystal. In the same story, the Torch and Wyatt encounter Prester John, a twelfth century knight who has lived on in suspended animation. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

55. (Oct.) "When Strikes the Silver Surfer!" Thinking that the Surfer is trying to steal Alica away from him, the Thing attacks the Space Wanderer. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

56. (Nov.) "Klaw The Murderous Master of Sound!" Klaw, this time in costume with increased powers, battles the FF in their skyscraper headquarters. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

57. (Dec.) "Enter. . . Doctor Doom!" While the FF seek to prevent Sandman and the Wizard from breaking out of prison, Dr. Doom is busy convincing the Silver Surfer that he is a kindly, benevolent monarch. Then, when th Surfer least suspects it, Doom manages to steal his cosmic powers. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

58. (Jan., 1967) "The Dismal Dregs of Defeat!" Using his stolen power, Doom utterly defeats the FF, but allows them to live in disgrace rather than killing them. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

59. (Feb.) "Doomsday!" While Reed tries to perfect a weapon to use against Doom, the arch-fiend terrorizes all mankind. Meanwhile, however, Black Bolt succeeds in freeing the Inhumans. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

60. (Mar.) "The Peril and the Power!" Reed lures Doom to the edge of Space, where Galactus's barrier, designed to imprison the Surfer on earth, strips him of his cosmic power, which returns to its rightful owner, the Surfer. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

61. (Apr.) "Where Stalks the Sandman?" In his fight with the Sandman, Reed is thrust into the mysterious Negative zone. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

62. (May) ". . .And One Shall Save Him!" Triton manages to save Reed before he reaches the Explosive Zone, but in the meantime, a Negative-zone being named Blastarr escapes into our world. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

63. (June) "Blastaar, The Living Bomb-Burst!" Blastaar teams up with the Sandman to battle the FF. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

64. (July) "The Sentry Sinister!" Landing on an out-of-the-way island, the FF encounter the Sentry, a robotic creature left on earth by a race of space beings known as the Kree! Inking: Joe Sinnott.

65. (Aug.) "I Accuse!" Angered at the destruction of his sentry, the Kree Supreme Intelligence sends Ronan the Accuser to mete out justice to the FF. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

66. (Sept.) "What Lurks Behind the Beehive?" A group of scientists creates a super-being only to find he is more powerful than they bargained for. In fact, they need blind Alica to even discover what he LOOKS like. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

67. (Oct.) "When Opens the Cocoon!" The FF manage to follow and rescue Alica, but the scientists who would be conquerors meet justice at the hands of the

being they created. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

68. (Nov.) "His Mission: Destroy the Fantastic Four!" Impersonating a scientist who had offered to help Reed change the Thing back to Ben Grimm, a mysterious stranger instead changes his personality to one of mercilessness and total hatred.. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

69. (Dec.) "By Ben Betrayed!" As the Thing fights to destroy the FF, Dr. Santini, in reality the Mad Thinker, double-checks his plan to insure success. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

70. (Jan., 1968) "When Fall the Mighty!" The Thinker, defeated by the FF, manages to signal a destructive android to join the fray, while Ben remains under the influence of the merciless mind machine. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

71. (Feb.) ". . .And So It Ends. . ." With Ben back to normal, the FF defeat the android. At the end of the adventure, however, Reed, fearing for the life of his expectant wife, announces that they are leaving the FF. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

72. (Mar.) "Where Soars the Silver Surfer!" Seeking to unite humans against a common foe, the Silver Surfer declares war on all mankind. (And, he's partially successful, for he re-unites the FF.) Inking: Joe Sinnott.

73. (Apr.) "The Flames of Battle. ." Doctor Doom tricks the FF into believing that Doom is about to attack them in the form of Daredevil, leading the Four to battle not only DD, but Thor and Spider-Man as well. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

74. (May) "When Calls Galactus!" While Galactus combs the Earth in search of the Silver Surfer, the Surfer enlists the aid of the FF, before fleeing to a micro-world. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

75. (June) "Worlds Within Worlds!" Galactus tells the FF that unless they find the Silver Surfer for him, he will destroy the entire earth. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

76. (July) "Stranded in Sub-Atomica!" The FF succeed in finding the Surfer, who agrees to confront Galactus. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

77. (Aug.) "Shall Earth Endure?" While the Surfer whiles away the hours by saving all mankind, the FF battle the sinister Psycho Man. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

78. (Sept.) "The Thing No More!" In between battling with the Wizard, Reed develops a formula that changes the Thing back to Ben Grimm--permanently. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

79. (Oct.) "This Monster Forever!" To save Alicia from a runaway android, Ben must become the Thing once again, but if he does, the world has seen the last of Ben Grimm. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

80. (Nov.) "Where Treads the Living Totem!" The FF and Wyatt Wingfoot battle Tomazooma, the living Indian Totem. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

81. (Dec.) "Enter--the Exquisite Elemental!" Crystal joins the team just in time to do in the Wizard again. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

82. (January, 1969) "The Mark of the Madman!" In his mad quest for power, Maximus seizes control of Black Bolt's kingdom. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

83. (Feb.) "Shall Man Survive?" The FF and the Inhumans thwart Maximus's plan to conquer all mankind with a hypno-gun. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

84. (Mar.) "The Name Is Doom!" In a wild take-off on "The Prisoner" television series, the FF become prisoners in Doom's kingdom of Latveria. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

85. (Apr.) "Within this Tortured Land" How can the FF prevent the destruction of Latveria at the hands of Doom's Robot Army when their powers have been hypnoticly removed? Inking: Joe Sinnott.

86. (May) "The Victims!" Having recovered their powers, the FF manage to save the village. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

87. (June) "The Power and the Pride!" When one of his own underlings interferes with Doom's plans to destroy the FF, he angrily grants them freedom to leave Latveria, freedom to meet the master of menace another day. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

88. (July) "A House There Was!" Sue goes house-hunting, but happens to pick a structure designed by the murderous Mole Man. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

89. (Aug.) "The Madness of the Mole Man!" The FF defeat the Moleman, but are unaware that heading towards Earth is a Skrull spaceship, piloted by the sinister Slaver. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

90. (Sept.) "The Skrull Takes A Slave!" Posing as Reed, the Slaver tricks the Thing and takes him prisoner. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

91. (Oct.) "The Thing--Enslaved!" Ben finds that he has been captured to fight in gladiatorial contests on a Skrull planet modeled after Earth during the prohibition-gang-war era. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

92. (Nov.) "Ben Grimm, Killer!" While the Thing fights reluctantly, the FF manage to trace him to the Skrull planet. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

93. (Dec.) "Arena of Death!" (cover title) or "At the Mercy of Torgo!" The FF succeed in freeing Ben and the other captives. Inking: Frank Giacoia, who not only didn't equal his earlier effort, but broke a beautiful fifty-issue run of Joe Sinnott inking.

94. (Jan., 1970) "The Return of The Frightful Four!" As if the poor Frightful Four don't have troubles enough with the Fantastic Four, Medusa double-crosses them and the FF's baby-sitter turns out to be a witch with a pet demon cat. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

95. (Feb.) "Tommorrow--World War Three!" The FF foils a plot to incite world-wide warfare. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

96. (Mar.) "The Mad Thinker and his Androids of Death!" The Thinker creates android duplicates of the FF in order to destroy his four hated foes. Inking: Frank Giacoia.

97. (Apr.) "The Monster from the Lost Lagoon!" Investigating a menacing lagoon creature, the FF find that he is really a harmless alien, seeking to replenish his ship's water supply on Earth. Inking: Frank Giacoia.

98. (May) "Doomsday on the Moon!" (cover title) or "Mystery on the Moon!" The FF prevent a Kree sentry from sabotaging Armstrong's history-making "one small step for man," enabling the U.S. to successfully land a man on the moon. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

99. (June) "The Torch Goes Wild!" Johnny mistakenly believes that the Inhumans are plotting to keep Crystal away from him. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

100. (July) "The Long Journey Home!" The Thinker and the Puppet Master create androids of the FF's most powerful foes, who attack the foursome in wave after wave, only to meet defeat. Finally, the sinister duo meet an explosive end as a result of their vain attempts to control a Hulk android. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

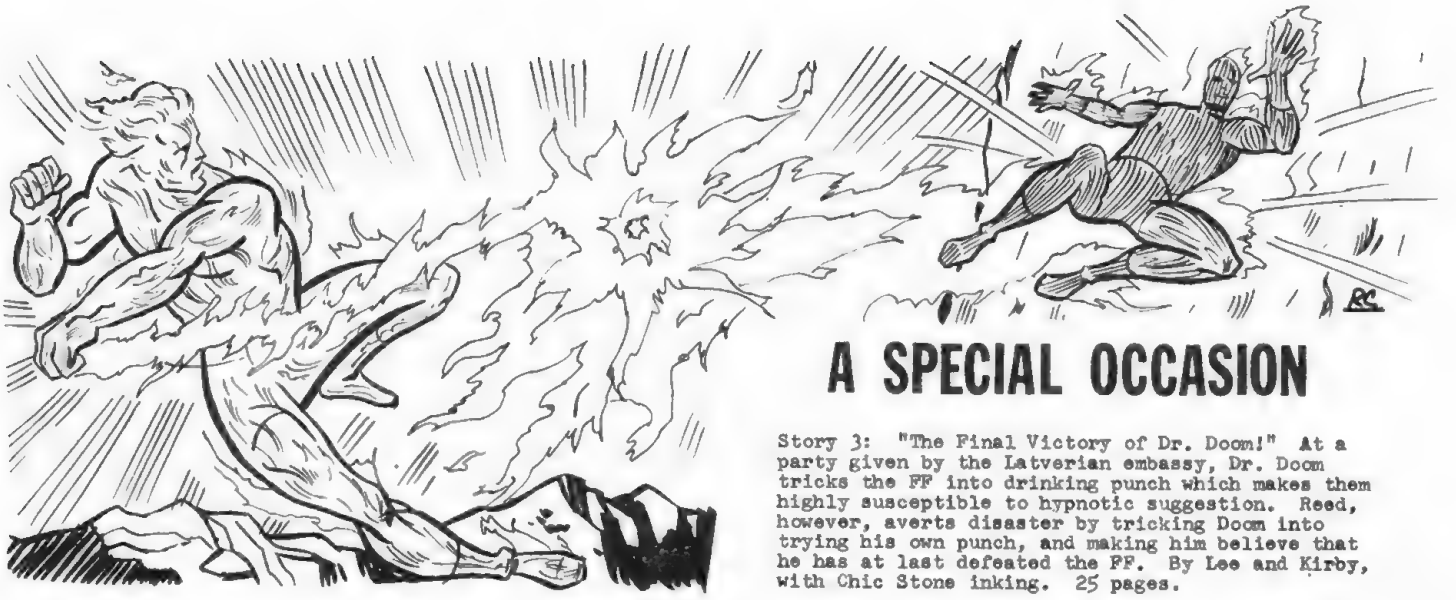
101. (Aug.) "Bedlam In the Baxter Building!" A Maggia leader known as the Top Man attempts to murder the FF and take over their headquarters. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

102. (Sept.) "The Strength of the Sub-Mariner!" Magneto provokes a war between Sub-Mariner's undersea kingdom and the surface world. The cover for this issue is drawn by John Romita and John Verpoorten, marking the first FF cover that was not pencilled by Jack Kirby. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

The Fantastic Four SHOULD HAVE BEEN discontinued with issue 102. Successful sellers never die, however; their ghosts continue under the same name. Thus, John Romita replaced Kirby as artist of the FF for a few issues, before turning the artistic chores over to John Buscema. However, Kirby was to return for one, final appearance:

108. (Mar., 1971) "The Monstrous Mystery of the Nega-Man!" The power of the Negative Zone creates an evil double of a scientist named Janus. About half of the story was pencilled by Kirby before leaving Marvel, with Buscema and Romita drawing the rest of the issue around the Kirby panels and making various revisions. Inking: Joe Sinnott.

S



A SPECIAL OCCASION

In 1963, Marvel decided to enter the 25¢ competition in a big way. At that time, National's annuals had been nothing but reprints, but the Marvel camp came up with 72 pages of stories and art, most of which had never before seen print. The first Fantastic Four Annual was a great success.

1. (1963) Story 1: "Sub-Mariner Versus the Human Race!" by Lee and Kirby, with inking by Dick Ayers. 37 pages. The Sub-Mariner finally finds his long lost undersea race, and his old love, Lady Dorma. However, Sub-Mariner's heart still belongs to Susan Storm of the Fantastic Four. Thus, when Sue is injured, Namor places her interests above those of Atlantis, and, upon his return to his undersea kingdom, finds that his people have left him in anger. Sub-Mariner's war against the human race is over--for the time being.

"A Gallery of The Fantastic Four's Most Famous Foes!" Full page pin-ups of the FF's villains, including the Mole Man, the Skrulls, Miracle Man, Sub-Mariner, Doctor Doom, Kurrgo, the Puppet Master, Impossible Man, Hulk, the Red Ghost and his Super Apes, and the Mad Thinker and his android. Pencils by Kirby, while the inking looks like George Bell. The pin-ups are accompanied by brief descriptive text, presumably by Stan Lee.

"Questions and Answers about the Fantastic Four" 2 pages of illustrated answers to questions most commonly asked by the readers. Art: Kirby. Text: Lee (?) Inking: Bell (?)

Schematic, one-page diagram of the Baxter Bldg., by Kirby, Lee (?) and Bell (?)

Story 2: "The Fabulous Fantastic Four Meet Spider-Man!" An expanded version of a two-page episode by Lee and Steve Ditko which appeared in The Amazing Spider-Man #1. Spider-Man trys to join the FF as a means of making money. By Lee and Kirby, with Inking by Steve Ditko. 6 Pages.

Story 3: "Origin of the Fantastic Four" edited reprint of portions of FF #1, with the Torch redrawn to conform with the rest of the annual. 13 pages.

2. Story 1: "The Fantastic Origin of Doctor Doom!" This story traces Doom's background through his early youth as a hunted, brilliant gypsy who dabbled in science and sorcery, through his college days with Reed Richards, when he disfigured his face in a forbidden experiment gone awry, through his travels in Tibet where he first donned the costume and name of Doctor Doom, up to the present, as ruler of the tiny kingdom of Latveria. By Lee and Kirby, with inking by Chic Stone. 12 pages.

"A Gallery of the FF's Most Fantastic Foes! This time, it's Super Skrull, Rama-Tut, Molecule Man, Hate Monger, the Infant Terrible, and Diablo." Also scattered throughout the issue are pin-ups of Torch, Sue, Thing, Alicia, and Reed. Inking this time appears to be by Chic Stone.

Story 2: Reprint of "Prisoners of Doctor Doom" from FF #5.

Story 3: "The Final Victory of Dr. Doom!" At a party given by the Latverian embassy, Dr. Doom tricks the FF into drinking punch which makes them highly susceptible to hypnotic suggestion. Reed, however, averts disaster by tricking Doom into trying his own punch, and making him believe that he has at last defeated the FF. By Lee and Kirby, with Chic Stone inking. 25 pages.

3. Story 1: "Bedlam at the Baxter Building!" Dr. Doom uses his emotion charger to stimulate Marvel's greatest villains into launching an attack on the FF during Reed and Sue's wedding day. Fortunately, such guests as the Avengers, the X-men, Nick Fury, and others are on hand to help beat back the attackers. 23 pages by Lee and Kirby, with Vince Colletta inking.

Remaining stories: "Captives of the Deadly Duo" reprinted from FF #6, and "A Visit with the FF" and "The Impossible Man" from FF #11.

4. Story 1: "The Torch That Was!" Before Johnny Storm, the Sub-Mariner fought another Torch, an android. What happened to him? Whatever his fate, he was found in 1966 by the Mad-Thinker, and is returned to life, with memory slightly impaired. Using a computer with an evil, destructive, human personality, dubbed Quasimodo for "Quasi-Motivational Destruct Organ," the Thinker blackmails the old Torch into attacking the new. However, at the last minute, the original Torch balks at the destruction of the FF, and turns on the Thinker, sacrificing his own life to save the others. 19 pages of story by Lee and Kirby, with Joe Sinnott inking.

Remaining stories: "The Hulk vs. the Thing" and "the Avengers Take Over" from FF #25 and 26.

5. Story 1: "Divide--and Conquer!" A villain from a sub-atomic world, who calls himself the Psycho-Man, sets out to conquer our world, armed with a device which enables him to control emotions. The Inhumans and the Black Panther join Thing and the Torch in defeating him. In this story, Reed announces that Sue is going to have a baby. Produced by Lee and Kirby, with Joe Sinnott inking. 30 pages.

Story 2: "This is a Plot?" Three-page humor story about Lee and Kirby, written and drawn by Kirby, with Frank Giacoia inking.

Pin-ups this issue include Black Bolt, Gorgon, Medusa, Karnak, Triton, Crystal, Maximus, a page of supporting characters, and a double-page spread of the FF. By Lee and Kirby, with Joe Sinnott inking.

Story 3: "The Peerless Power of the Silver Surfer." The Surfer grants Quasimodo a human body, but when Quasimodo turns on his benefactor, the space sentinel transforms him to a statue. 12 pages by Lee and Kirby, with Frank Giacoia inking.

6. "Let There Be. . .Life!" The FF battle a negative zone menace called Annihilus to secure a rare element which can save the life of Sue and her baby. At the end of the book-length, 48-page story, Sue gives birth to a baby boy. By Lee and Kirby, with Joe Sinnott inking.

7. Only the cover of the 1969 special is new. The stories are an altered, cut-length version of FF#1, and reprints of the stories in the second FF annual which had appeared there for the first time. This issue features four pages of photos of the Marvel staff.

The secret of the Fantastic Four's phenomenal success? Probably, there was no one, magic key, but a glance over the plot summaries on the previous pages should indicate that exciting, complex plot twists were not what carried the F.F. to the top, although many of the plots were indeed excellent. In fact, plotting was the hallmark of Marvel's competition over at National.

The initial appeal of the Fantastic Four was conceptual. Lee and Kirby had decided on a comic that would break the rules--not the plotting rules, for F.F.#1 was a very standard tale--heroes gain powers from cosmic rays, vow to fight evil, prevent madman from conquering the world. Lee and Kirby decided to rebel against the concept of the hero as a masked avenger with no personality of his own, and they did this by creating a group with four very distinct personalities. Reed Richards was a fairly cliche leader figure, with an important difference--his super-power, the same as the late Plastic Man's, contrasted sharply with the dignified image he projected. Reed wasn't entirely likeable--he was a bit of a know-it-all, and when tired, sometimes blew his celebrated cool.

Reed's girlfriend, Susan, was also rather traditional, a girl-next-door type. Lee and Kirby often chose to make her a focal point of their stories, and in doing so, succeeded in portraying a remarkable range of female emotions. Mary Marvel was antiseptic, the Dragon Lady merely the most memorable of many stock-Caniff women, but Susan Storm was a character in her own right, not a type.

Resurrected from the forties was the Human Torch--now a hot-headed adolescent whose passions could prove as fiery as his flaming body. Played off against the Torch was Lee and Kirby's most original creation of the group, the grotesque Thing, whose powerful, orange-skinned mass imprisoned the brain of a rough-and-ready ex-gridiron star from the wrong side of the tracks.

Plotting often took back seat to, or centered around, the potential conflicts inherent within the personalities of the various characters. In issue three, for example, the Torch becomes angry and quits the FF, heading for the bowery, where he encounters the Sub-Mariner in the next issue. Characterization integrated with plot, even at this early stage.

Indeed, in those early issues, Lee and Kirby devoted pages of space to developing character--readers got a glimpse of the FF when they weren't fighting crime. They would watch the Torch incinerating a copy of the Thing's comic book, join Mr. Fantastic visiting a shut-in, or overhear the Thing reading a letter from the Yancy Street Gang. Lee and Kirby introduced ambiguities--did Sue really love Reed, or the handsome Sub-Mariner. Certain re-occuring themes began to appear--Mr. Fantastic's search for a potion that would restore the Thing to human form, for example.

They may have fought similar foes, but Marvel's heroes were quite different from National's--National's were aloof, Marvel's, eminently approachable. If Alanna took Adam Strange fishing, it was only to show him a strange species of exotic fish for one panel, and then it was off to fight the next menace to Rann. With the FF, readers sometimes got the impression that they were in a hurry to defeat the Mole Man because Sue had an appointment with her hairdresser.

Often, the foursome found that the key to their problems was not, as was the case with the Flash, discovering some scientific chink in their foes armor, but overcoming their own inner conflicts and differences. Diablo would exploit the Thing's desire to be human, or the Skrulls would use the Storms' love for their father to split the FF. DC's message was that if you came from Krypton, you could defeat your foes. Marvel said that if you conquered yourself, you could conquer anything.

In the mid-sixties, Lee and Kirby expanded the cast. The Inhumans, Wyatt Wingfoot and others, all added depth, because all had personalities which interacted with the FF. The Fantastic Four grew and developed like real people, like friends you gradually got to know better. Sue outgrew her crush--was it only that--on the Sub-Mariner and married Reed. Torch and the Thing developed a lasting friendship beneath their surface bickering, and the liet-motifs continued--the search for a potion that would make Ben human, a cure for Alicia's blindness, Johnny's love for fast cars, the mock-heroic battles with the Yancy Street Gang. These were the substance of the FF--one might want to defeat the Joker or Dr. Doom in the short run, and one could accomplish this, but life also has long-range goals--getting married and raising a family--finding fulfillment as a person. Because the members of the FF had these goals, the short-range ones became all the more meaningful.

Lee and Kirby developed a structure to support their characters. Instead of cramming one or two stories in an issue, they would strech them across two, or three, or seven issues, and would, of course, continue sub-plots and motifs across plots. Later on, at DC, Kirby would experiment with theme and plot which streched across four different magazines.

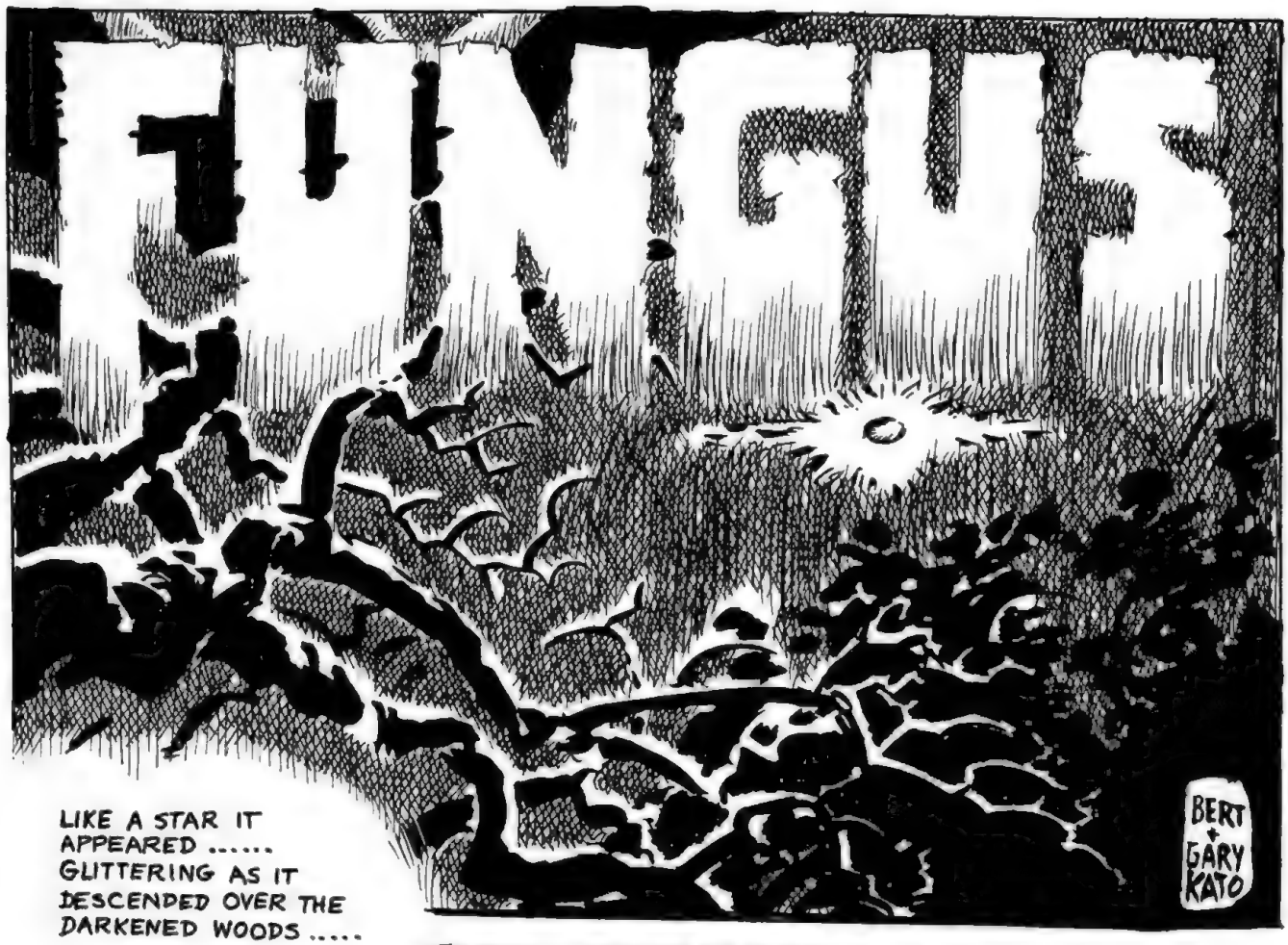
Kirby's last issue of the FF had all the little touches that had made the book great. It opened with Crystal giving the Thing medicine for his flu, while the orange gargoyle groused "Nuts! I'd rather hab the code than haveta swawwow this stuff!"

Finally, mention should be made of Kirby's art. Kirby was always a brilliant story-teller, always a master of portraying action, but with the FF, he stylized his art even further, broadening his lean figures into romantic, muscular giants, and setting the super-hero fashions for the sixties.

It was a damn good book.

100 faces of the
Fantastic

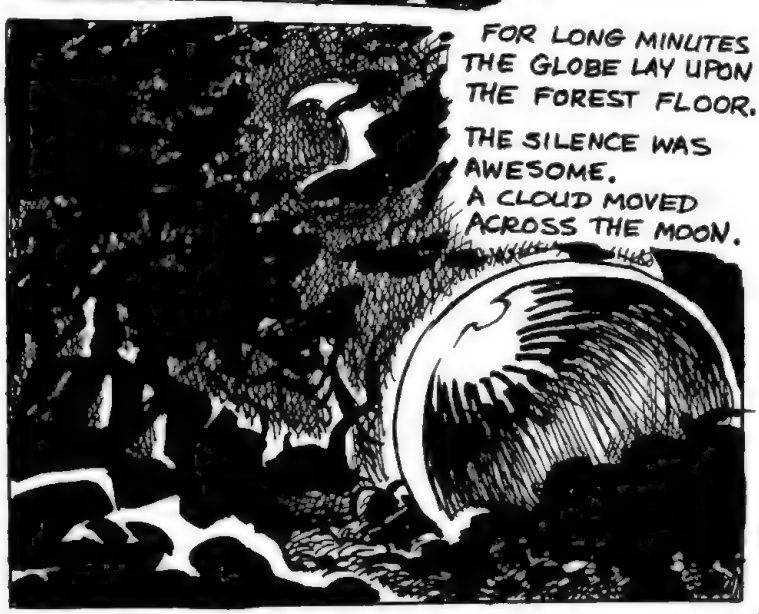
by MLD '70
DEDICATED TO JACK KIRBY
Four



LIKE A STAR IT APPEARED ..... GLITTERING AS IT DESCENDED OVER THE DARKENED WOODS .....

A GLOWING, SILVER ORB, SILENT AS A SERPENT AS IT GLIDED DOWN THROUGH THE TWISTED TANGLE OF BRANCHES,

AND WITH A FINAL FLARE OF LIGHT, SLOWLY SETTLED IN A SMALL CLEARING.



FOR LONG MINUTES THE GLOBE LAY UPON THE FOREST FLOOR.

THE SILENCE WAS AWESOME.

A CLOUD MOVED ACROSS THE MOON.

BLACK SHADOWS FLITTED ACROSS THE GLOBE'S SURFACE.
BUT BLACKER STILL WAS THE DARKNESS THAT STIRRED WITHIN.
I HAVE LANDED.
AND I MUST BE FREE TO BEGIN MY MISSION
THE GLOBE'S SURFACE SHIMMERED THEN DISSOLVED ...
---- ABSORBED INTO THE BODY OF THE THING THAT EMERGED FROM IT.
THE ELDERS WERE RIGHT
THIS PLANET IS RICH IN LIFE FORMS.
LIFE THAT WE FUNGUS NEED TO FEED UPON.
OUR RACE HAS FOUND A NEW HOME.
THE SPECIES CALLED MAN RULES HERE, BUT THEY CANNOT STOP US.
BUT NOW AFTER MY JOURNEY I MUST RENEW MY STRENGTH.
JUST AHEAD I SENSE A RICH SOURCE OF DECAYING ORGANIC MATERIAL.
ALL AROUND ME! .....
--- I SENSE OTHER FUNGUS BEINGS. BUT I DETECT NO INTELLIGENCE, ONLY THE RAW PRESCENCE OF LIFE. THEY OFFER US NO RESISTANCE.
NOW I SHALL PLANT MYSELF FIRMLY IN THIS GROUND....
... AND LET MY BODY ABSORB THE NOURISHMENT IT NEEDS.

.... AND TO PROTECT MYSELF FROM DISCOVERY WHILE I SLEEP, I SHALL SUBTLY ALTER MY BODY TO RESEMBLE THE PRIMITIVE FUNGUS BEINGS AROUND ME.
WHEN MORNING COMES, I SHALL SPREAD OUR SPORES ACROSS THIS WORLD. IN A SHORT TIME WE SHALL POPULATE THIS PLANET.
WE SHALL BE SUPREME.
THE HOURS PASSED AND THE SKIES LIGHTENED.
THE FAINT GRAY LIGHT FILTERED LAZILY THRU THE CANOPY OF TREES, DIMLY LIGHTING THE CARPETED FOREST FLOOR.
AND THE MORNING FLOWED SOFTLY ACROSS THE PATCH OF WOODS, BRINGING WITH IT THE FRESH BREATH OF LIFE AND THE GENTLE PROMISE OF HOPE.
IT IS DAWN.
NO! THEY COULD NOT HAVE KNOWN! THEY COULD NOT!
NOOOO..
AAAAA
HEY, JIM. YOU SURE WERE RIGHT ABOUT COMING HERE TO PICK MUSHROOMS. LOOK AT THIS HUGE ONE.

The Chronicle of the Black Sword

by Al Bradford

Elric of Melnibonè! Now there's a name to conjure with, if you'll pardon the pun. The creation of a talented young British writer named Michael Moorcock, Elric is hardly your brawny, semi-literate, Conanesque Sword and Sorcery hero. An anemic albino, barely able to move without the aid of magical herbs, Elric doesn't seem to be the heroic type at all, Sword and Sorcery or otherwise. Yet when he wields Stormbringer, his enchanted black runesword, he is all but invincible in battle. Stormbringer, vampire-like, drains off the souls of anything, man, god, or demon that Elric kills with it, and feeds a portion of their strength and vitality into his frail body. Tragically, though, the hellish Black Sword, which has a sentient life of its own, often seems to prefer the blood and souls of Elric's friends, loved ones, and kinsmen to that of his enemies. More than once, Stormbringer has twisted in its unwitting owner's grasp, and shrieking gleefully, plunged itself into the vitals of someone he holds dear. Because of this nasty habit, and despite the fact that he is virtually helpless without it, Elric tried more than once to rid himself of the terrible weapon. Once, while aboard a ship sailing the high seas, he tossed the sword overboard only to have it stick in the water as if it had been thrown into sand. Another time, he deliberately dropped Stormbringer into uncharted wilderness as he winged his way homeward astride one of the Melnibonéan Dragons. Thinking it gone for good, he told his wife, Zarozinia, "I'm tired of swords and sorcery. ...But at last I have rid myself once and for all of that hellblade, which I had thought my destiny to carry always."

"Stormbringer, you mean?' she gasped."

"Of course, what else?"

"She said nothing. She did not tell him of the sword which, apparently of its own volition, had come screaming into Karlaak and passed into the armoury to hang, in its old place, in darkness there."

Stormbringer gives its user incredible abilities, but when used in conjunction with its identical twin sister-sword, Mournblade, the magic weapon's powers more than double. Elric and his cousin, Dyvim Slorm, were able to wield the two swords together telepathically and cause them to destroy an enemy by remote control.

The underlying theme of the Elric saga is the oldest one in literature; the battle to retain the balance between Good and Evil, or as Moorcock refers to them, Law and Chaos. The irony is that both Elric and Stormbringer, originally servants of Chaos, are pressed by the workings of implacable Fate into service on the side of the White Lords of Law. In time, Elric is forced, albeit reluctantly, to combat all the old gods and demons he once worshipped. Included among these is Lord Arioch, his patron demon, one of the Dukes of Hell. When Elric is first told by Sepiriz, a messenger of Fate, that he must fight the Lords of Chaos, he whispers their names, fearful of invoking them merely by speaking their names aloud.

The cosmic balance was upset by Jagreen Lern, a human sorcerer from the contry of Pan Tang, who sought to emulate the Sorcerer Kings of Melnibone, by making pacts with The Chaos Lords for his own ends, namely the conquest of the entire Earth. Little did the evil necromancer realize, however, that he was setting forces in motion far beyond his meagre abilities to control. As the Forces of Chaos spread their influence over the planet, corrupting not only the minds and bodies of everyone they came in contact with, but the very <u>matter</u> of which the Earth is made, it appeared that their dominion would be complete,

and that nothing could halt their inexorable advance across the face of the world.

Nothing, that is, except Elric, his companion Moonglum, and the soul-thirsty Black Sword, Stormbringer.

--*

The illustration below is from Stormbringer the last book in the Elric saga. Elric battles the Lord Pyaray, The Captain of the Chaos Fllet, summoned by Jagreen Lern. The Chaos Fleet, a mighty armada of unearthly ships, normally sails under the deepest part of earth's oceans, and is manned by the souls of drowned sailors.

On the opposite page is Myshella, The Sleeping Sorceress from the book by that title, astride her mystic metal bird. She aided Elric in his running duel with Theleb K'aarna, an evil sorcerer, which spans several stories.

Sue & Al Bradford

SPACED OUT

by TOM FAGAN

Time!

Time is endless and alive when you're going where no one's ever gone before. Where me and DayGlow are heading. Way out; far as you can go.

Spacing. Capsule trajectory. The 3,670 million mile glide. Man, that's a ways.

I think of Armstrong. Moon-walking Armstrong. Oh wow! Hardly a skip and a jump from Little Mother Earth's gravity apron strings. Greim speeding with Mercury; lickety-split. Cosgrove who got hung up with Venus. . . a love freakout if ever there was one.

Black hitting the big one on Jupiter after Bradford had turned it on with Mars. Dayglow and me?

We're going to rush right past Saturn; kick it to Uranus. . .crash pads both of them. Who'd want to come down there anyway? We're shooting for the end one.

Pater Pain-Killing Planet---Pluto. Revel in the unknown, out of touch with the ordinary; reality's different there!

"What are you thinking, Starmark?"

"Happy thoughts," I reply.

"Like tell me one," grins DayGlow.

"We're getting there, man," I answer, "A mere 880 million miles remaining. We'll make it easy for sure. Think of it. Square Earth's way back there!"

"And we're way out here," agrees DayGlow. He snaps his fingers. . ."Yeah, Starmark, way. . .way . . .way out here!"

I'm nodding. Everything's cool; everything's tranquil. No hassle. Good stuff, for two good guys. Who? DayGlow and Starmark. That's who! This time we really scored.

Re-Entry. Drifting and dreaming. Red light flashing. Dayglow saying not to worry. He has the fix and we'll keep on going. Straight to All-Father Pluto. Waiting for us there.

Dayglow outside. Space-walking. Separating crossed-up cables. Rocket engines humming. A flash and DayGlow still smiling whipped back and spinning and smiling and smiling and spinning is held in an eternal fall.

Moment that is hour and minute that is second and infinity that is year. Time telescoped; ship grounding on surface. Excape hatch thrown open. And me hurled forward. . .to stand tall and erect for an instant. . .

Proudly surveying Pluto.

A view breathtakingly beautiful.

A sight without compare.

For Starmark's eyes alone

A spectacle rare.

A scene for once. . .all there!

-1-

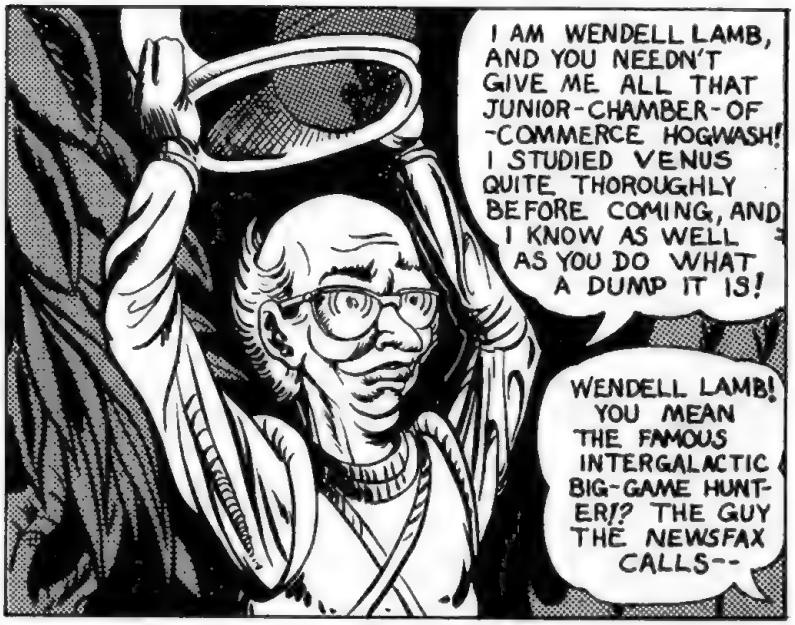
Rats running from two bodies in an alleyway. A woman screaming, "God, yes, that's my son, Harold Day!" A father quietly weeping, "Mark McClure was; I mean, is his name!"

A police officer tiredly noting:

"O.D.'s. Apparently fell from roof."

A diminutive newspaper headline, reading, "Spaced Out."

A journey through a universe complete!



"THE FINEST HUNTER IN THE WORLD!"

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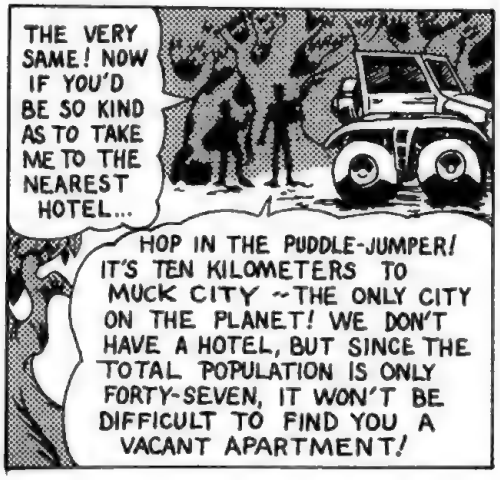
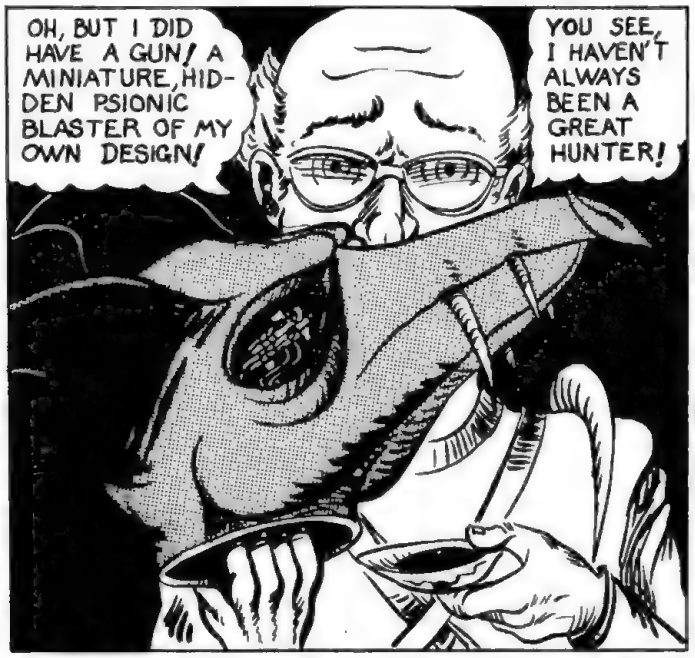
STORY BY HARRY HARRISON : ART BY AL BRADFORD

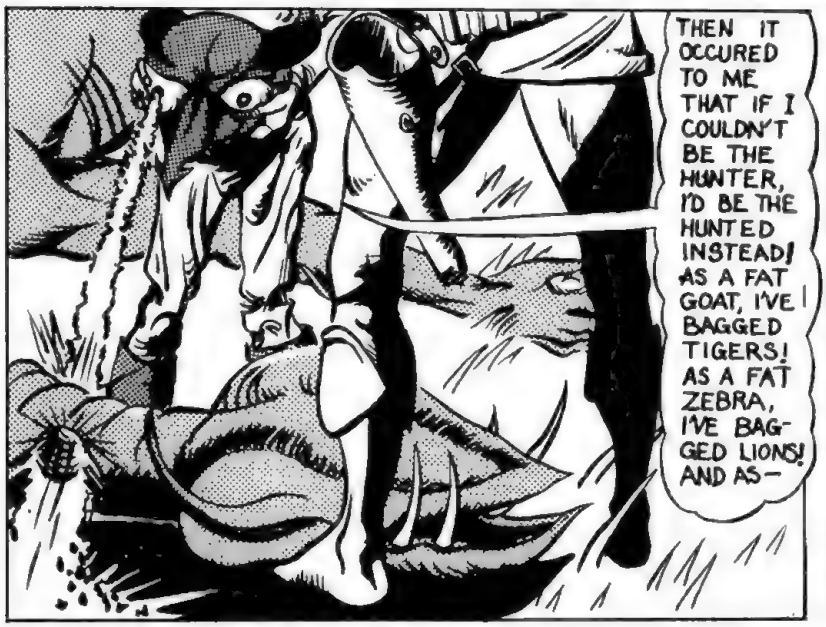


THERE'S NO GODDAMN JUSTICE! HERE I AM, YOUNG, STRONG, AND HANDSOME, YET I'M STUCK IN THIS MUCK-HOLE! BUT WILEY HERE, FIVE FEET TALL, POT-BELLIED, AND WITH GLASSES LIKE COKE BOTTLE BOTTOMS, IS FAMOUS-- AS A HUNTER!!
THAT MUST BE MUCK CITY NOW!
I MUST SAY, IT LOOKS LIKE A VERITABLE FORTRESS!
IT HAS TO BE! DID IT EVER OCCUR TO YOU WHY NO ONE EVER BAGGED A SWAMP THING? WELL I'LL TELL YOU WHY!
SKREEEE!
THEY'RE HALF A TON OF SHEER DESTRUCTION! THEY CAN RUN, JUMP, SWIM, AND FLY! THEY HAVE POISON FANGS AND A RAVENOUS APPETITE FOR HUMAN FLESH! BUT-- IF YOU ARE WELL ARMED WHEN ENTERING THEIR JUNGLE, THEY WONT COME NEAR YOU!
AH, YES-- EVERYTHING YOU'VE SAID IS QUITE TRUE. BUT I'VE NEVER FAILED YET! NOW WOULD YOU PLEASE HAND ME THAT MASK?
THANKYOU, MR. SPINGLE. I HAD THIS DISGUISE MADE TO MY SPECIFICATIONS ON OMIKRON 4! IT WAS QUITE EXPENSIVE!
THERE! HOW DO I LOOK?
LIKE A FAT SWAMP RAT!
PRECISELY! NOW SHALL WE MAKE HASTE BACK TO THE JUNGLE? I'M READY TO HUNT!

LATER-
I SHOULDN'T BE MORE THAN 20 MINUTES, MR. SPINGLE! IN THE MEANTIME, YOU'D BEST WAIT HERE! THESE WOODS ARE NOT SAFE AT ALL!
NOT SAFE, HE SAYS! I'LL BE SURPRISED IF HE LASTS FIVE MINUTES!
IT SHOULDN'T BE A TOTAL LOSS, THOUGH--I'LL BET HE'S GOT LOTS OF VALUABLE STUFF IN HIS LUGGAGE THAT I—
SKREEE!
BZZAT
MAYBE IF I SAVE THE LITTLE NERD, HE'LL LAY OUT A NICE, FAT REWARD!
I'M PLEASED TO NOTE YOUR CONCERN FOR MY WELFARE, MR. SPINGLE; BUT IT'S QUITE UNNECESSARY, AS YOU CAN SEE!
WHAT TH—! HOW IN HELL DID YOU MANAGE TO KILL A SWAMP THING?! AND WHAT'D YOU SHOOT IT WITH? YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE A GUN?


OH, BUT I DID HAVE A GUN! A MINIATURE, HIDDEN PSIONIC BLASTER OF MY OWN DESIGN!
YOU SEE, I HAVEN'T ALWAYS BEEN A GREAT HUNTER!

I USED TO DAY-DREAM CONSTANTLY ABOUT HUNTING... BUT ALAS~~
NATURE CURSED ME WITH A PHYSIQUE TOTALLY UNSUITED TO IT.... I'M WEAK, CLUMSY, AND NEARSIGHTED!

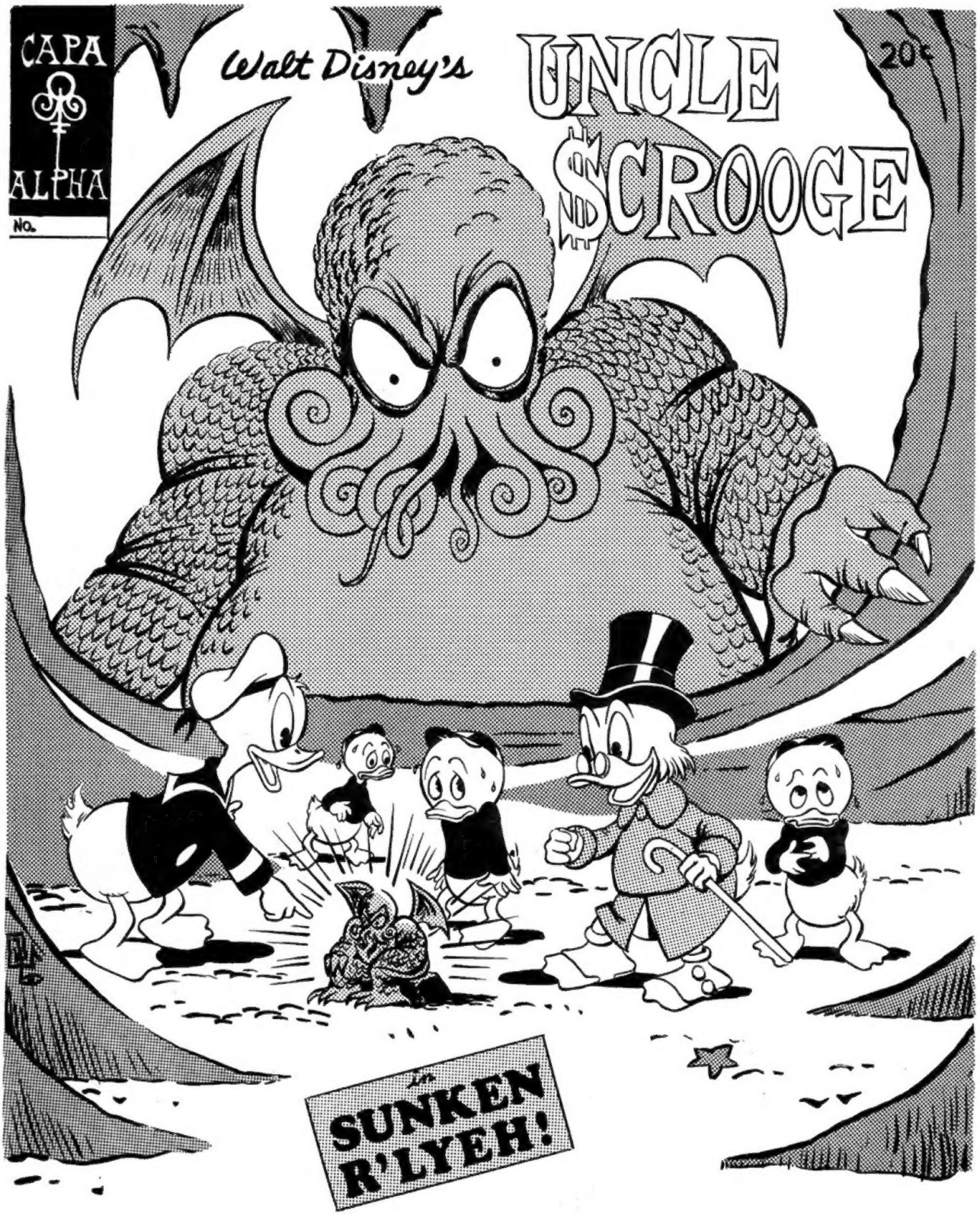

THEN IT OCCURED TO ME THAT IF I COULDN'T BE THE HUNTER, I'D BE THE HUNTED INSTEAD! AS A FAT GOAT, I'VE BAGGED TIGERS! AS A FAT ZEBRA, I'VE BAGGED LIONS! AND AS—

-A FAT SWAMPRAT, YOU BAGGED A SWAMP THING! SIMPLE, YET EFFECTIVE... SO THAT'S HOW YOU BECAME THE GREATEST HUNTER IN THE KNOWN UNIVERSE!

BUT YOU MADE ONE FATAL MISTAKE, LAMB! WHAT'S TO STOP ME FROM USING YOUR METHODS, AND BECOMING THE MOST FAMOUS HUNTER MYSELF?—AFTER I GET RID OF YOU!!
ZAK!!
MY BLASTER!!

WITHOUT THAT MINI-BLASTER YOU'RE HELP-LESS! SO LONG, SUCKER!
I BEG YOU TO RECONSIDER--
SKRZZZ
AAAAAGH!
SIGH-THEY NEVER LISTEN! THEY ALWAYS MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE!
THEY ALL THINK THAT I'M HELPLESS! BUT I DIDN'T EARN MY REPUTATION BY BEING HELPLESS!
SINCE I'VE BEEN BLIND IN ONE EYE FOR TWENTY-SIX YEARS, IT WAS A SIMPLE MATTER TO HAVE A SECOND PSIONIC BLASTER SURGICALLY IMPLANTED!
YES, ALL PREDATORS, NO MATTER WHO OR WHAT THEY ARE, UNDERESTIMATE ME!
LET'S SEE NOW, THAT MAKES MY FIRST VENUSIAN SWAMP THING, AND MY NINETEENTH UNSCRUPULOUS GUIDE!
END

Believe it or not, there <u>is</u> a perfectly rational explanation for the drawing below. After reading Brian Lumley's excellent Lovecraftian pastiche "<u>The Burrowers Beneath</u>" and Barks' classic "<u>In Ancient Persia</u>" (which, coincidentally or not, resembled closely the plotline of Lovecraft's "Case of Charles Dexter Ward") I wondered: "What if Carl Barks had done a Cthulhu Mythos story?" The imaginary Uncle Scrooge cover below, originally used in Capa-Alpha, was the result.



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POOKIE!
POOKIE!
POOKIE!
APPROVED BY
AUTHENTICATING
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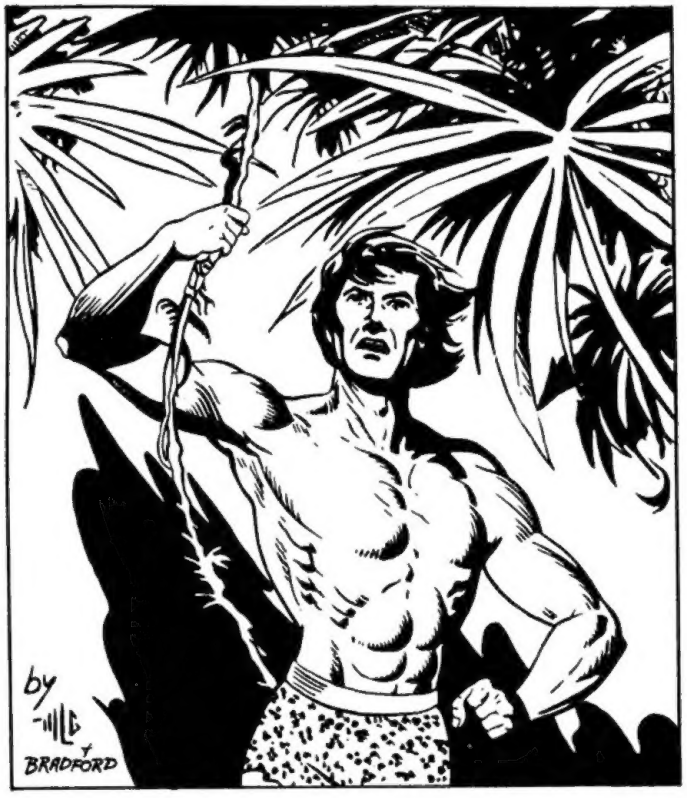
Polio

MISCELLANY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